

News Release



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2009 California State Parks Director's Recognition Awards Announced

SACRAMENTO – California State Parks Director Ruth Coleman announced the recipients of the 2009 Director's Recognition Awards. The awards go to those who distinguished themselves for their extraordinary achievements. "We want to recognize our public servants and partners who tirelessly devote themselves to our State Parks' mission," said Director Coleman. "It is this kind of dedication that has made California State Parks one of the finest park systems anywhere in the world."

The awards are presented once a year. The winners were selected by the Director from among nominations submitted to Sacramento headquarters by the department's employees from across the state. Among the award recipients are individuals who recognized needs and found ways to meet those needs against the odds; some identified long-standing problems and found creative solutions; and there were recipients who built unity among diverse groups and thus reached goals beyond expectations.

"I am proud to recognize these talented and innovative individuals on behalf of California State Parks," Coleman said.

The awards will be presented from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 19, 2010, in the Resources Agency Auditorium at 1416 Ninth Street in Sacramento.

The Olmsted Award for Leadership and Vision

Ocotillo Wells Interpretive/Education Program Team (San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial Counties) The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division at Ocotillo Wells, under the guidance of Superintendent Kathy Dolinar and her team of Rangers, Interpreters, Seasonal Aides and Volunteers, brought programs to children and adults alike. By introducing geo-caching at this State park, this team combined education with adventure for the fun-loving OHV crowd and is highly commended for their innovation. The staff on the team includes Steve Quartieri, Ali Barnes, Steve & Jan Chaney, Ken Conway, Jim Cooper, Andy Fitzpatrick, Cheryl Gillott, Sophia Kast, Lesley Manent, Lesley Nuno, Louise Phillips, Jeffrey Price, Caitlin Raymond, Carleen Roerts, Christina Rinas, Beth Shugan, and Sarah Young.

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The Hill Award for Inspiration

David R. Gould, State Park Superintendent (Retired), Diablo Vista District, (Alameda, Marin, San Francisco Counties). Dave has been a steadfast leader and an inspiration to many people throughout California for more than 33 years. Throughout his career, Dave's major public object was to convert everyone to be park lovers and stewards. His persistence and guidance insured protection of natural and cultural resources. He will be remembered for his positive impact on California, his great attitude and awesome inspiration, and his fun portrayal of Galen Clark - the first ever ranger in California appointed in Yosemite in 1866.

The Drury Award for Professional Integrity

Marcy Brown, Manager II, Statewide Bonds Unit/Budget Section (Sacramento County) has worked tirelessly to keep bond-funded projects on track during these recent draconian budget slashes. She efficiently managed her State Park's team, and coordinated with the Department of Finance, State Treasurer's Office, and the Natural Resources Agency to work together to get the job done. Ms. Brown displays incredible integrity in all aspects of her life and is admired by many.

The Mott Award for Innovation (Two Award winners for 2009)

William F. Mennell, Staff Park & Recreation Specialist, (San Diego County) led his team to the near-completion of an historic restoration of the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Old Town San Diego. Extensive work and many years were required to negotiate with the various stakeholders, ensuring the project's historical accuracy. It has been nearly 100 years since this hotel has had overnight guests, but it will soon be opening up as a bed and breakfast. Mr. Mennell's team includes Larry Felton, Therese Muranaka, Karen Beery, Greg Giacomuzzi, Nellie Gonzalez, Niloufar Minovi, Robert Moore, Bob Patterson, Donna Renner, Denise Robideau, Robert Robinson, Ellen Sweet, Patsy Turner, Victor Walsh, and Casey Wear.

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Outdoor Youth Connection Program, Office of Community Involvement (Sacramento County) spearheaded efforts to provide programs that reconnect urban youth with the outdoors. The innovative programs and events were fun, educational, and will continue to inspire children to appreciate the great outdoors. State Park team members included Michael DeBoer, Dolores Mejia, Terry Gerson, and Russ Kimura. Other contributing members are Alisha Keller, Grants Manager, from the California State Parks Foundation; and Drew McAdams, Executive Director of the Pacific Leadership Institute at San Francisco State University.

The Dewitt Award for Partnership (Two Award Winners)

Save the Redwoods League (Sacramento, San Francisco, Marin, San Mateo, Sonoma, Contra Costa, Monterey, Santa Cruz, Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, Mendocino Counties.) Accepting the award is Pete Dangermond, President; Mary Wright, Vice President; Ruskin Hartley, Secretary & Executive Director. This non-profit agency has been helping to preserve Redwood forests and ecosystems since 1918. As partners of California State Parks, last year the League acquired property for the addition to Humboldt Redwoods State Park, Humboldt Lagoons State Park, Montgomery Woods, and property in the connecting corridor to the King Range National Conservation area.

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National Park Service (NPS), Pacific West Region (San Francisco, Marin, San Mateo, Sonoma, Contra Costa, Monterey, Santa Cruz, Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, Mendocino, San Diego, Santa Cruz, Humboldt, Del Norte, Siskiyou, Los Angeles and San Diego Counties). Winning names accepting the award include George Turnbull, Acting Regional Director, Patty & Don Neubacher, Cicely Muldoon, David Siegenthaler, Ray Murray, Steve Chaney, Frank Dean, Woody Smeck, and Dennis Schramm. This Federal agency regularly partners with California State Parks and has made vast contributions to the CSP mission. As partners in various locales throughout the State, our organizations have become intertwined. Last year the NPS provided short-term financial assistance to CSP units at North Coast Redwoods , Marin, and Angeles Districts and other areas to avert the threat of park closures – enabling 12 State parks to remain open.

The Ingenuity Award

Point Dume Graffiti Project, Malibu Sector/Angeles District (Los Angeles and Ventura Counties). The Leo Carrillo Maintenance team and other staff members lead by Oscar Rodriguez cleaned up vandalism and damage on an ancient coastal bluff at Point Dume State Beach, thereby returning the terrain to its unspoiled beauty. The team confronted dangerous challenges because of the sheer cliff where the damages occurred. Team members include Kristi Birney, Oscar Garza, John McHarg, Daniel Raducanu, Shane Smith, Barbara Tejada, and Dennis Woodworth.

Special Commendations will be presented to the following:

Robert Birkland, State Park Ranger (Sonoma County). This commendation recognizes Officer Birkland for his creativity and enthusiasm for co-chairing the marathon benefit which ultimately raised \$20,000 towards the completion of the Annadel State Park visitors' center.

Larry Hendrickson, Senior Park Aide, Anza Borrego/Colorado Desert District. (San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial Counties). Larry is being recognized for his constant dedication and tenacity to the effort of eradicating the Saharan mustard, a non-indigenous plant from North Africa which is invading the Colorado Desert.

Special Act or Special Service Awards

Nathaniel (Nate) Buck, Seasonal State Park Lifeguard, at Sonoma Coast State Park (Sonoma County) is being honored for his skill and determination for saving the life of a young woman when her vehicle flew over a 50-foot cliff and landed on jagged rocks as the swell of the sea continuously broke upon the shore.

Jeffrey Scott Sipes, State Park Ranger, Pajaro Coast (Santa Cruz County). Jeffrey is esteemed for his heroic efforts on June 28, 2009, when he saved the life of a 17-year-old boy being electrocuted by downed power lines at Rio del Mar State Beach.

James Nothhelfer, State Park Ranger and Timothy Fellars, State Park Lifeguard, Santa Cruz District (Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties). These two officers are being honored by the Department and were also awarded the Governor's prestigious Medal of Valor for their bravery on June 22, 2009, when they saved the lives of six people, including two young children, after their fishing boat capsized into the rocky reef and hazardous waters near Moss Beach at Half Moon Bay.

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